

Guttenberg rides the 'Tower of Terror'

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As Halloween approaches again, TV is saying "Boo!"

Numerous programs have trick-or-treat themes in the coming days, from *Frasier* (Tuesday, NBC) and *Family Matters* (Friday, CBS) to — logically enough — *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (Monday, WB) and *Sabrina, the Teenage Witch* (Friday, ABC). The viewing week also will begin with an eerie tale, courtesy of *The Wonderful World of Disney*.

Inspired by a popular attraction at Florida's Disney-MGM Studios,

If you view

Tower of Terror will air at 7 p.m. Oct. 26 on ABC.

Tower of Terror airs Sunday on ABC, with Steve Guttenberg as a reporter whose ethics are questionable. He gets a chance to redeem himself when he probes the mystery of several people who vanished from a Hollywood hotel elevator nearly 60 years earlier. Assisting him are his niece (played by teen actress Kirsten Dunst, of *Interview With the Vampire* fame) and his ex-boss (Nia Peeples), who also is his former girlfriend.

"Fantasy is fun," Guttenberg says. "It's a great genre, and the audience loves it, too. I've always loved scary stories. We filmed some of the exteriors for this at Walt Disney World, then we did the rest of it in Los Angeles. I'd never been to Disney World before, but I had a great time there. It was a really beautiful, fun place."

Tower of Terror isn't Guttenberg's only encounter with ghosts, since he also stars in *Casper: A New Beginning*, which was released directly to the home-

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video market recently. Both projects involved extensive special-effects work for him, and he says he enjoys that process "because the guys who (supervise it) are usually easy to work with. It's really a simple gig. All you have to do is look where you're told.

"The toughest thing to do, though, is to not just 'phone it in.' You really have to look like you believe what you're doing, and your mind might tell you it's unimportant because there's nothing else actually there, but it can count a lot later on. How it fits into the final product can make any piece of film you do very important."

Though he's also known for his work in comedies such as *Three Men and a Baby* and the *Police Academy* movies, Guttenberg has parted with realism before, notably in *Cocoon* and *High Spirits*. He claims there's no master plan to such choices: "I just read a story

and if it appeals to me, that's really all there is to it. To me, the key to doing movies is to pick really good ones. Then, you just hope people will like them."

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The family-film audience has been in Guttenberg's thoughts a lot lately, since besides *Tower of Terror*, he's also done *It Takes Two* (with the Olsen twins of *Full House* fame), *Zeus and Roxanne* and another Disney project, *The Big Green*. However, his credits also include such adult thrillers as *The Bedroom Window*, and he likes to keep people guessing about what he'll tackle next.

"Our brains are lazy," he reasons, "and we don't want to think of other people as other things. It's too confusing and it's too hard, but that's



Tower of Terror · Kirsten Dunst and Steve Guttenberg star in the ABC movie.

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the job of an actor, to keep popping up in different places." TV hasn't been one of those places very often, but Guttenberg maintains, "I like television because it reaches every-

where, but you also have to be very careful what you do there."

Next from Guttenberg is an action movie called *Airborne*, marking yet another change of pace for him, and he may follow that by returning to the theater with a play in New York City.

Meanwhile, *Tower of Terror* is helping him make his mark in the genre he says he'd most like to do more of: "Horror. I've done some pictures that turned out to be horrifying, but that's not quite the same thing. Still, I've been very, very lucky in my career."

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